



West Virginia Professional Educators wvprofed.org

A Student's Mind Is Too Precious To Be Bargained For

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Good Morning President Perry, Supt. Burch, & Esteemed Board Members,

First off, congratulations to Mr. Clayton Burch for your continued role as our state superintendent, and to the board's wise decision to keep him there. Supt Burch is indeed the right person at the right time! Also, we wish Dr. D'Antoni all the best in her "retirement". We recognize her as a driving force behind the innovative developments of CTE programs, and are pleased to hear that she will continue sharing her expertise in developing these protocols for use across the curriculum.

As WVPE continues our role as part of the re-entry advisory council, we know that the development of the goals and plans of the nine focus areas are being modified on a daily basis. We also know that recent spikes in Covid19 numbers has not made it easy to make the final decision for re-entry. It is our opinion that, no matter which scenario is chosen by local districts, educational opportunities for our students will be compromised one way or another, as we put in place the protocols needed to keep them safe. We do agree that their safety, and well-being is of utmost importance. We are also ready to support our teachers and administrators and are concerned for their safety and well-being as they take on the colossal task of balancing the needs of all of their students. We also need to continue to provide opportunities for student creativity and to develop guidelines to safely ensure that our music and arts classes will forevermore be a constant in their daily lives. This is a vital part of our student's intellectual development.

We appreciate and have experienced first-hand, the hard work and dedication that the WVDE and the State Board have put into this re-entry process and are looking forward to the launch of the new WVDE website. WV Professional Educators will continue to offer our assistance in dealing with the various hurdles that both teachers and students are bound to face as we all set the stage for re-entry. Stay safe!

Virginia Harris

From: Kym Randolph <krandolph@wvea.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 3:51 PM
To: Virginia Harris
Subject: WVEA delegation comments for the State Board meeting on 7/8/2020
Attachments: WVEA delegation comments - reopening of school.docx

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Please find comments from WVEA President Dale Lee attached. Thank you!

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July 7, 2020

Below you will find comments for the WV State Board of Education on the re-opening of school from WVEA President Dale Lee.

The re-opening of schools must include requirements that ensure the safety of education employees and students.

- For educators it must include universal access for employees to adequate PPEs – not just masks but face shields and gowns. Employees deal with a variety of students in vastly different situations that require more than just masks. School systems should be required to have adequate supplies and make them readily available to all employees that request them.
- Employees in at-risk categories or those with family members in their homes with health conditions that place them in at risk categories must be able to have accommodations made for them. The circumstances/process under which those accommodations shall be made should be clearly spelled out and uniform from employee to employee.
- Additionally, education employees traditionally have very little time at their worksites to prepare for the arrival of students. This year that time is needed more than ever in order to determine routines and safety protocols. Employees need at least 2 weeks in their classrooms without students in order to get adequately prepared for the new routines necessary to protect both students and employees.
- The WVEA believes in the empowerment of employees and their ability to find solutions to difficult challenges. They can only address those challenges if they have time to discuss and brainstorm with their colleagues in advance of the arrival of students. The employees who are at the worksites and work with the students each day are in the best position to develop the plans to keep them safe and to keep our schools running smoothly.
- Many counties have very few substitutes to work in their system. Many systems rely on retirees to help fill in as subs. Those retirees may be considered at-risk or no longer wish to sub. How are we going to ensure that an adequate number of employees are available each day to do the work that is currently required let alone the new tasks that are being added to enhance safety? How does a county fill positions if a number of regular employees need to be off for medical reasons? The issue of subs both for professional and support personnel must be addressed prior to the start of school.
- This school year will be stressful for everyone. It will be especially stressful for our education employees. There needs to be additional days built into the calendar for everyone to 'catch up'. This can be accomplished by building days into the calendar without students and without virtual education. These days are needed for employees to get together and discuss things that are working well and things that need to be changed. It also gives them time to plan, contact families and prepare lessons. This needs to happen on a regular basis each month.

Virginia Harris

From: Fred Albert <FAlbert@aftwv.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 3:37 PM
To: Virginia Harris
Subject: July 8, 2020 BOE Meeting
Attachments: letter to the WV BOE.docx

[EXTERNAL SENDER]: Do not click links, open attachments or reply to this email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon Ms. Harris,

I would like to share the attached letter and the link to an article that was shared with me with the BOE members at the July 8, 2020 BOE Meeting. Since I cannot attend the BOE Meeting in person, please consider this as a request to be a delegate representing AFT-WV.

<https://medium.com/@harley.litzelman/teachers-refuse-to-return-to-campus-b9afa039ef2e>

Fred R. Albert

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"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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July 7, 2020

West Virginia Board of Education
Capitol Building 6, Room 351
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Greetings to the Members of the WV Board of Education;

I bring greetings from AFT-WV and I hope all of you are staying safe and being well.

I so wish that I could be with you in person today, but I do want to thank you for the opportunity to reach out via email.

I know your jobs are extremely difficult right now in the midst of this Covid-19 virus pandemic that is facing all of us, and I do appreciate all you are doing to keep our students and our educators, and school employees as safe as possible.

I would like to share an article with you that was given to me by a concerned educator in our state. This teacher also has some personal concerns that she shared with me, and I asked for permission to pass them on to you. She is a teacher and an attorney, and she did agree for me to share her concerns with the board.

I have linked the article in the email and hopefully it will open so you may be able to read it. I think it does hit on many of the concerns of educators across our state and the nation.

The teacher I mentioned said the following;

1. I think reopening is unrealistic and that the state and counties in West Virginia should decide ASAP.
2. Teachers need to plan if they are going to be doing online school again.
3. Schools should not reopen because (a) teachers should not be asked to die for their jobs or expose family members and have them die; (b) teachers should not be placed in a position to further spread the Covid-19 virus.
4. Any plan to reopen should include compliance with CDC guidelines, personal protection measures provided by the county and perhaps even hazard pay.

I hope that every possible safety measure is being considered as we plan for the upcoming school year.

Thank you again for all you continue to do for our students and educators and communities in our beloved state of West Virginia.

Best regards,

Fred Albert
President AFT-WV
falbert@aftwv.org